

Original article, which may or may not approve my comment:

[“https://www.tor.com/2023/11/25/doctor-who-celebrates-60th-anniversary-by-reuniting-one-of-its-greatest-teams-in-the-star-beast”](https://www.tor.com/2023/11/25/doctor-who-celebrates-60th-anniversary-by-reuniting-one-of-its-greatest-teams-in-the-star-beast)

My comment:

I'm sorry but it's very ironic that this review brings up the Doctor asking for the Meep's pronouns and respecting those pronouns, only for this review to misgender the Meep by referring to the Meep as "it". The Meep explicitly uses nameself pronouns -- ie, the Meep/the Meep's. The Meep doesn't use it/its pronouns. I see so many people celebrating that this episode is "making TERFs mad", but then in the same breath they misgender the character *whose pronouns we are explicitly told*.

The Meep is not an it, he, she, or they. The Meep is always "The Meep", as is demonstrated in the episode. But I guess people only care about neopronoun users when our existence will make TERFs mad, but not when it comes to actually using our pronouns! I wish I could say I'm surprised, but by this point the Doctor Who fandom has proven to me they don't actually respect neopronoun users, they

just hold us up to scare away TERFs, immediately followed by misgendering us -.-

As many people have pointed out, Rose being trans *because* of the metacrisis is just the "nonbinary alien" stereotype all over again, as a tripple whammy with the Meep also being the only character in this episode using neopronouns, and here's something I haven't seen anyone else point out--

If Rose were being written like a character who makes sense, why wouldn't she have just asked the Meep's pronouns when she first met the Meep? Why didn't she introduce herself to the Meep with her own pronouns? If she's the sort of person who corrects other when they assume someone's pronouns without asking...then if she were a real person not meant to set up a tired, transphobic joke ("Did you just assume my gender?!?"), then she would have literally just casually asked for the Meep's pronouns in the first place, instead of only randomly getting upset when the Doctor assumes he/him for the sole purpose of being corrected.

No parts of this scene was written in a way that makes sense for the characters as we're supposed to believe they exist. If we accept that Rose is willing to go to bat for other people about asking for pronouns instead of assuming, then she would have asked as soon as she met the Meep! She would have asked the

Doctor! She'd be introducing herself to everyone she meets with her pronouns!

But no, that would mean that Russel T Davies didn't get to use the "Did you just assume my gender???" joke in 2023 while pretending to be progressive about it. And it very much is *pretending* to be progressive about it, because if he actually wanted to show that asking for pronouns is normal, *he would have had Rose and the Meep introducing themselves with their pronouns in the first place!*

Imagine if Rose had asked for the Doctor's pronouns! Imagine if we'd gotten to have a legitimate conversation about the Doctor's pronouns and gender identity outside passing jokes! Imagine if the Doctor had been given the real opportunity to think about the answer and genuinely choose, rather than having everyone else assume based on whether they think the Doctor currently looks like a man or a woman! Imagine if we'd actually gotten to see the Doctor allowed to truly express a preference or even just saying "all pronouns are fine with me"!

But no. We get another iteration of the "trans people are unreasonable and get pissed off over things that don't matter" joke but this time...pretending to be progressive so now people aren't mad. Even though it makes no sense for any of the characters and is

clearly only here because the cis man writing the episode thought it'd be funny.

And seriously, does Russel T Davies think all trans people are inherently nonbinary? Because there is a massive difference between purposefully creating representation for nonbinary trans women / transfeminine people, and assuming that all trans people, no matter their gender identity, are inherently nonbinary. And because Russel T Davies doesn't seem to understand the difference, he gives no explanation to the audience, which is made up of millions of cis people, for whom this is their first introduction to trans and nonbinary people! So now are they gonna think all trans women and trans men are inherently nonbinary? Are they gonna think all AMAB nonbinary people use she/her pronouns?

RTD has a responsibility to represent trans people in a responsible way, and this episode is just failing that. Rose is presented as being trans and nonbinary only because she's not fully human, as though being trans is something unnatural that happens *to* you rather than something *you are*.

And even if we ignore the rest of the problems with the way trans issues were handled in this episode, you know the thing that's causing the most lasting damage?

Russel T Davies teaching millions of people, cis and trans alike, that assigning other people "x-presenting" terminology is Progressive™ and Cool™ and Fun™ and Acceptable™. When trans people have been talking about how harmful assigning other people these terms is for years now.

It's literally just misgendering but masquerading as progressive, and placing the blame on the person being misgendered, rather than asking the perpetrator to check their own biases and learn not to assume people's genders or pronouns just based on appearance.

No one has ever asked the Doctor what pronouns to use, or what gender-terms, or anything. All everyone does is assume based on the gender of the actor who currently has the role. And that's not how gender works. And calling it "gender-fluidity" is just completely false. Gender fluid people aren't literal shapeshifters who magically change their sex when their gender shifts, and saying that the Doctor is inherently genderfluid because a woman had the role one time is just, plain biological essentialism and assuming that everyone who looks like a man is a man, and everyone who looks like a woman is a woman, and all aliens are magically cis to whatever their current society-assigned sex is.

Which is something trans people have also been talking about since Jodie Whittaker took the role. Just because the Doctor is being played by a man at the moment does not make the Doctor a man. That's just reinforcing cissexism and shoving trans people under the rug so you don't have to think about us anymore. Why do you think the Doctor has to be a man because David Tennant is in the role? Why do you think the Doctor has to be a woman because Jodie Whittaker had the role? It's because considering the idea that gender is separate from sex is uncomfortable for you, so you decide that the alien shapeshifter Must Always Be Cis To The Sex I Think They Are Right Now.

And I was hoping RTD would maybe address this when he came back as showrunner, but we've all seen where that's taken us now. So I guess we're just gonna keep playing this game of "everyone's always cis because I don't want to think about gender" for the next few years.

And no, the Doctor is not “male-presenting” just because David Tennant is in the role. That’s not what those terms mean, and it is absolutely negligent for Russel T Davies to have characters assigning these terms to other characters without permission, while portraying this as Progressive and positive and funny. It’s literally just misgendering. It’s not okay.

And again. Cannot stress enough how painfully ironic it is that this review is praising the show for respecting the Meep's pronouns while misgendering the Meep with it/its pronouns that *the Meep explicitly does not use*.

There's absolutely no excuse for misgendering the Meep after you praise the show for not doing that. Come on, people, please at least *pretend* you respect neopronoun users if you're gonna hold us up as anti-TERF shields -.-

I need absolutely everyone reading this comment, whether you're cis, trans, nonbinary, or other, to swear on all you hold as holy that you will not ever call someone any "x-presenting" term unless you've explicitly been told by that person that that's how they identify.

Do not call trans women who haven't transitioned "male-presenting" or "masculine presenting". Do not call trans men who haven't transitioned "female-presenting" or "feminine-presenting". Do not call gender nonconforming men "female-presenting" and do not call butch women "male-presenting". Do not call nonbinary people any of these terms unless you've explicitly been asked to do so. "male-presenting" is not a synonym for "looks like a man" or "wears men's clothes" or "assigned male at birth", and vice versa for "female-presenting".

These terms are strictly for self-identification only.
Assigning them to other people is literally just
misgendering. Do not do it.